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ABSTRACT

Designed as a channel for communication among City University of New York faculty regarding initiatives to reduce attrition and promote student success, this publication contains articles on various aspects of student development and bilingualism. The volume contains: (1) "The Process Is the Purpose," an introduction by Anthony F. Russo, which comments on the importance of plurality and equity in the college environment; (2) "Teaching Human Development: The Interrelationship of Learning and Healing," by W. David Cheng, which describes the successful use of an approach in which students share and interpret their own life experiences in the course "The Psychology of the Life Experience"; (3) "A Self-Development and Career Orientation Course for Bilingual Students," by Jennie T. Roman; (4) "Supporting the Community College," by Leon M. Goldstein, which offers a commentary in support of the community colleges in New York City; (5) "Improving Student Self-Concept: The Video Interview Process," by Fredric L. Mayerson and Edward G. Martin, which describes Kingsborough Community College's use of videotaping to help students prepare for initial job interviews; (6) "The Ultimate: Two Way Bilingualism," by Richard Graf, which assesses the status of various programs for limited English proficient students in states that have adopted English as their official language; (7) "Overcoming Cyberphobia: Reducing Negative Attitudes towards Technology," by Renato R. Bellu and Edward G. Martin; and (8) "Facing the Educational Challenges of the 90's," by Robert L. Hess. (GFW)

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Ideas TOGETHER

A Publication of the Center for Initiatives to Develop Enrollment Advancement Strategies
Volume II, Number I
Spring 1990

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KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
OPPORTUNITY
SUCCESS

Norman P. Toback

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Ideas
TOGETHER

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Ideas **TOGETHER** was established as a channel for communication among faculty involved in the promotion of initiatives to reduce attrition and increase student success.

The opinions expressed in this periodical are those of the authors and do not reflect the institutional philosophy of any of the participating institutions.

Ideas **TOGETHER** is a publication of the Center for Initiatives to Develop Enrollment Advancement Strategies {I.D.E.A.S.} Conceived and inspired by Anthony F. Russo, Dean of Students, Kingsborough Community College CUNY.

Ideas TOGETHER

"Knowledge will always govern ignorance, and any people who mean to represent governance, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."

James Madison

Volume II
Number 1
Spring, 1990

Guidelines For Authors

TOGETHER invites manuscripts directed to the common interests of student affairs generalists who have broad responsibility for student development and retention, administrative and professional leadership, and support services for student leadership and success. Particularly welcome is stimulating writing dealing with a) current professional and academic issues, b) research reports of significance, c) critical integration of published research and innovation, and d) the application of techniques, practices and programs to deal with attrition, retention, and student persistence and achievement.

Articles on specialized topics should be written so as to provide the generalist an understanding of the importance of the program to student success; such as an article should not take the form of a program specialist writing to program specialist. All material should communicate ideas clearly and interestingly to a readership composed mainly of practitioners.

TOGETHER is not primarily a research journal in the specialized sense, although we welcome articles based on research and written for the generalist. Research should stress the underlying issues or problems that stimulated the research, treat the methodology concisely, and most importantly, should offer a full discussion of the results, implications and conclusion. We encourage the submission of the thoughtful essay, statements of position and historical overviews.

1. Prepare the manuscript in accordance with the APA Publication Manual.
2. Send the original and three copies of the manuscript to the editor.
3. Place author's name, position and institutional affiliation only on the separate title page.
4. Double space all portions of the manuscript including references, tables, figures and quotations. Leave generous margins (at least an inch) on each page.
5. Avoid sexist terminology: see the APA Publication Manual, change sheet 2. Guidelines for nonsexist language in APA Journals.
6. Do not use footnotes; incorporate the information into the text.
7. Use the APA reference style, listing only references cited in the text.
8. Use the active voice to the largest extent possible.
9. Check subject and verb agreement. Use verb tense appropriately. Proofread your manuscript before submission.
10. Manuscripts should not exceed 2,000 words (approximately 8 pages of double-spaced typewritten copy including references, tables and figures). Letters to the editor should be under 300 words. Those accepted for publication may be edited or abridged.
11. Submit only those manuscripts not under consideration by another journal.
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N.B. Authors bear full responsibility for the accuracy of references, quotations, tables and figures.

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Ideas
TOGETHER

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The Process is the Purpose

The Open Enrollment student is no longer a simply defined or easily described category.

- CUNY's 192,000 students who are enrolled in credit courses range in age for 16 to 85, of which 64 % are female and over 25 % are over age 30.

- They represent 50 different countries of origin and 18 native languages.

- Over 33% of our present students are from homes where a language other than English is spoken.

- More than half of CUNY's students are members of identified racial and/or ethnic minority groups.

It falls upon the University, its colleges, faculties and staffs to celebrate and support the pluralistic interests and backgrounds of the students, and to ensure a meaningful lifestyle. From the celebration of diversity comes the inner strength and personal development all students need in order to capitalize upon educational opportunity. Together we can be both the force and the model for cultivating an enduring regard for interdependency.

The fostering of human equity on campus (re: age, sex, ethnicity, religion, race and culture) creates an environment where students share a common purpose while accepting and understanding inherent differences. The cohesiveness and wellness of our University (in light of our mission to provide higher education for a non-traditional, ever-changing pluralistic population) is directly related to the endorsement of values that help to promote cross-cultural awareness and interaction. We must recognize that although mono-cultural courses, clubs, events or other related activities enhance an individual sense of pride and knowledge, they must be interfaced with opportunities to develop a shared appreciation of our communalities and communication with students from diverse backgrounds. Ultimately, the responsibility for advancing the rights, differences and values of others rests with all of us.

It is, therefore, not only necessary for each college to establish a viable collaborative process for the advancement of pluralism and equity, but essential that the University support a Center for the Advancement of Pluralism and Equity (C.A.P.E.) as a means by which to recognize, integrate, communicate, respect, understand, and celebrate our individuality and commonality. C.A.P.E. should be made up of counseling and instructional faculty, students, staff and administration. It should function as a catalyst for shaping a "together" environment.

The challenge and responsibility of educational professionals is to be proactive to the needs of current and future generations. The establishment of such a center recognizes that addressing issues of human equity and mutual understanding involves a process not a product. New issues will always emerge.

Anthony F. Russo
Dean of Students, Kingsborough Community College

TEACHING HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF LEARNING AND HEALING

W. DAVID CHENG

Because of my background in Clinical Psychology and Psychoanalysis, I was recruited to teach "The Psychology of Life Experience," a somewhat nebulously titled course which is intended to focus on the development of the healthy person throughout his/her life cycle. A goal of the course is to examine basic life crises and representative stressful situations (sex, marriage, family, work, career, aging, death) before exploring ways personal mastery and growth can emerge from these experiences. I have singled out this particular course as evidence of educational rewards possible on the undergraduate college level in the hope that its structure and/or technique may prove valuable for disciplines other than psychology, which intends to be a bridge between the sciences and humanities where critical discernment and evaluation of life experience may occur.

A textbook entitled Personal Adjustment and Growth, by H. Barocas, W. Reichman, and A. I. Schewebel (St. Martin's, 1983), provided the basic structure through which the major theoretical and research contributions of psychoanalysis, behaviorism, humanism, and cognitive psychology were to be presented. This text also provided a logical progression of "Challenges through the Life Span": "crisis and growth in infancy, childhood, and adolescence; friendship, love, and loneliness; sexuality; marriage, family and alternative lifestyles; work and career development; challenges of adulthood; death, dying, and bereavement." Another book, Psychology of Adjustment: Personal Growth in a Changing World by E. Atwater (Prentice-Hall, 1987), has been especially helpful in dealing responsibly with more recent problems of psychological adjustment. Presenting this material in such a way that would maintain the attention of a classroom full of commuting students exhausted from a hard day's work was a problem that required a bit of consideration. A straight lecture presentation format would have proven futile.

My personal and professional experience has led me to understand that learning can best be accomplished through the action of dialogue between teacher and students, an open exchange of ideas and opinions. In a course on the psychology of life experience, the best approach would surely be to explore the theoretical aspects of the subject as they related to actual experiences of the students. The first half of the class would consist of a lecture, followed in the second half by a student's presentation of a personal experience. This presentation would take the form of a

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recounting of events, feelings, and afterthoughts, followed by group questions and discussion. The presentation would be pre-assigned to relate to the topic under discussion that week. Moreover, the presentation of the latest journal articles and pertinent books was to be complemented by student discoveries, including newspaper articles and current topics of importance or urgent concern. For example, a confirmation that sharing and interpreting life experiences may indeed be the best approach to our course could be found in D. Goleman's recent article, "Erikson, In His Own Old Age, Expands His View of Life." Here the author notes that the well known psychoanalyst Erik H. Erikson and his wife Joan "contend that wisdom has little to do with formal learning. 'What is real wisdom?' Mrs. Erikson asked. 'It comes from life experience, well digested'." (The New York Times; June 14, 1988; C 14).

The success of such a program would depend on the responsiveness of the students to the format and on my ability to create a safe, accepting, supportive environment that would allow people the freedom and courage to open up and discuss their experiences. Such an environment needs an especially effective beginning. Therefore, in our first class the students were divided into two groups and were assigned to learn one another's names. Both groups were encouraged to use mnemonic devices that would relate a name to a feature, characteristic, or previously known person, but in only one group were students told to say something about themselves. When the two groups reunited, the second group showed considerable more ability to recall names and why they had been remembered. A simple "test" at the second class meeting, and referring to students by name, quickly helped provide personal information and prepare for the sense of trust that would permit communicating and sharing on a deeper level—requisites for the semester's work ahead.

The shared experiences have reflected the heterogeneous nature of the class, which consists of students from diverse racial, religious, and economic backgrounds, ranging in age from late teens to early fifties. For example, at Baruch College, Asian students alone belong to such different organizations as Asian Students Association, Chinese Students Association, Chinese Christian Association, Chinese Culture Club, Club India, Indian International Club, Filipino-American Club, Korean Student Association, Korean Club, Vietnamese Society, and the Hong Kong Club. The list reveals both a rich and positive diversity but also a population crying out for a sense of belonging. Stress, racial and cultural stereotyping, and problems of identity are some of the difficulties faced by perhaps the majority of City University of New York students. Although sharing such experiences is not easy, their importance and commonality helps get discussion of psychological adjustment started, so that even more serious problems and their interpretation can follow.

The experiences recounted have included confrontations with a wide range of psychological challenges, from racial stereotyping and bigotry to anorexia nervosa, sexual harassment, mid-life career change, alcoholism, drug addiction, death, and bereavement. The presentations have been open, candid, frequently

emotional, and have met with warm and receptive responses from a group that has shown great sensitivity to the presenter. A review of some of the most memorable of these classes may reveal the rewards in teaching the course.

One student shared her experience with anorexia nervosa, a disorder (generally of adolescent females) in which the person becomes so fearful, especially of obesity, that starvation may occur. Now twenty-five and quite attractive, she showed pictures of herself at seventeen, when she was both overweight and underweight. She confessed, however, that even at her thinnest, her body image was fat. The distortion became so serious that hospitalization was necessary, followed by therapy that helped identify the problem and establish a self-image that was realistic and positive. Her present self-control and grace provided inspiration to those facing other issues of destructive self-perception.

Another student described her experience of dating, in which sexual attraction combined with poor relationships, created a disturbing, if familiar, pattern. Her present understanding of that pattern allowed freedom from its repetition—and brought hope to some of her classmates in the room.

A woman recently married told the class about her wedding and its significance in her life. A tape of a love song from the wedding brought tears to her eyes—and sympathetic tears and smiles to those who shared or realized the emotional impact of her rite of passage.

A man who missed class one week because his wife was having a baby reported the next week on that experience. Having practiced the Lamaze method of delivery, husband and wife became father and mother together, and the student was able to express a unique sense of joy associated with the birth of a child.

One woman, talking about her divorce, felt that therapy had helped her and her husband out of a failing marriage. And most important in this potentially tragic situation was her own sense of a growing self-image in which her talents, career, and independence could be affirmed—without resentment toward her husband or other men.

Another woman shared her experience of death and bereavement after her boyfriend died suddenly in a car accident. Here the class explored with her the sense of helplessness in misfortune, grief in losing someone loved, and bereavement that honors one's loss and yet builds a new foundation for returning to life with confidence and hope.

A young man, studious and articulate, described his encounter with traumatic illness and death. He began with a clinically accurate account of the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, including the disabling effect of the HIV (or HTLV) virus on the T 4 blood cells protecting the body against infection, the most

common opportunistic infections, and the limited means of communicating the virus. Then he recalled the diagnosis of a friend soon after the disease was identified—and the frightening speed and scope of his deterioration and death. He continued: "I have known several other gay men who have been diagnosed with AIDS. As time has passed, the spectre of the disease has become like an approaching storm or like a net that was gradually closing in, gathering up more and more of us." Some time after volunteering to participate in a study at the New York Blood Center to screen for HIV and its antibodies, he learned of his own exposure to AIDS. At each point, the student was clear about the emotional impact of his experience— and the resulting changes in his behavior. We were surprised in many ways, both by the student's courage and maturity in confronting disease and death and by his destruction of many of our stereotypes of homosexuality. His account of gay men's struggle for positive self-identity and basic human rights was accompanied by a description of his own personal battle to affirm life in the face of fear and death. The disease had certainly set tragic horizons on his future, but it had also shaped him positively, bringing through suffering a sense of extraordinary maturity, strength, and wisdom.

Finally, some students were able to depict psychological adjustment to aging, at times with humor. One woman in her fifties discussed problems of dating—and her good results from personal advertisements in The Village Voice. Her own laughter was met with supportive empathy and enjoyment from the class. A man, not much older, described aging as finally allowing a sense of his own complete identity that was not defined by work, family, or the effects of increasing physical debilitation. As evidence he claimed that for him, in retirement, his return to college was not a means to something else, like vocational advancement, but simply a matter of his longstanding love of learning.

All in all, the class shared and learned a great deal from the different cultural, emotional, intellectual, and interpersonal aspects of life presented within the framework of the psychology of life experience. Indeed, the discoveries were of life-changing importance, in terms of both personal development and the promise held by sharing concerns in a trusting and affirming community. The class certainly enriched its teacher.

One reason such learning and enrichment can occur is well articulated in D. Goleman's article on Erik and Joan Erikson cited earlier. Assessing the Eriksons' contribution to this country's understanding of psychology, the author refers to their 1950 work, when they presented a chart of the life cycle at a White House Conference on childhood and youth. In this chart, "each stage of life, from infancy and early childhood on, is associated with a specific psychological struggle that contributes to a major aspect of personality."

Originally, the Eriksons defined wisdom in the elderly as a more objective concern with life itself in the face of death. Now that they are at that stage of life, they have been developing a more detailed description of just what the lessons

of each part of life lend to wisdom in old age. For each earlier stage of development they see a parallel development toward the end of life's journey.

For instance, the sense of trust that begins to develop from the infant's experience of a loving and supportive environment becomes, in old age, an appreciation of human interdependence, according to the Eriksons.

"Life doesn't make any sense without interdependence," Mrs. Erikson said. "We need each other and the sooner we learn that the better for us all." (The New York Times; June14, 1988; C 1)

I assumed in my strategy for structuring The Psychology of Life Experience course that exploring problems at progressive stages of the life cycle would work well. But success would depend not only on the personal insights shared but also on the student's growing skills in critical perception and interpretation of experience. The combination of texts, articles, current events, and especially student presentations allowed us to move in the semester from the more superficial to the profound, both in the experiences reported and in the critical insight that shaped the presentation and gleaned wisdom from experience, wisdom that proved helpful to us all.

Such wisdom is discovered in the classroom, however, only if a context of mutual respect and trust is created and maintained. The students developed enough sense of interdependence, to use the Eriksons' term, that this learning from one's own and one another's life struggle could take place. The value of what is learned is confirmed when students return years later to say how much they remember the course and continue to find it meaningful and helpful. For a memorable and life-changing study of the psychology of life experience, CUNY provides a setting and constituency probably unsurpassed anywhere else at the present time. The diversity in age and background allows a broad spectrum of particular and universal problems of psychological adjustment to be revealed. The commuting and exhaustion do create a greater need for social connection and community, a sense of belonging; yet this need, once recognized, can also serve to mobilize and deepen the appreciation of one another—and of our interdependence.

A SELF-DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER ORIENTATION COURSE FOR BILINGUAL STUDENTS

Jennie T. Roman

Within the Bilingual Program of Kingsborough Community College in the Department of Student Development, a career-counseling and orientation course is one of the strategies designed to help, orient, and assist bilingual students who have problems adapting to the College and in making occupational choices.

As part of the holistic approach to delivering services to the students the course is developed specifically to meet the needs of these students. This course is a one-credit, one-hour, twelve-week course, with a maximum of fifteen students. The small size is essential for a more individualized form of instruction. Often a class is divided in order to have the desired small group. Sections are conducted seminar-style. A self-profile paper is required at the end of the course as a measure of self-evaluation. The course is taught by a Spanish-speaking faculty member and understands the cultural values of the Hispanic society. These values may differ from those of the American Society. "Language is culture and culture is coded in language" (Bohannon, 1973, p. 35). Bohannon ties language and culture into an indivisible code. "Culture is a double code both internally and externally acquired" (p. 36). Culture is defined as the total shared way of life of a given people, consisting of their modes of thinking, acting, and feelings, which are expressed, in religion and law. (Kneller, 1966; Bohannon, 1973).

PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS

Bilingual students have the same psychosocial needs as other young adults for career preparation, independence, intimacy and a sense of identity. (Erikson, 1968; Super, 1957; Blumenthal, A.L. 1977). Some major congnitive, affective and motivational considerations related to students are recognized in teaching this course. Cognitive and attentional deficits due to language problems are addressed. To speak means to be in a position to use a certain syntax, to group the morphology of language, but it also means to assume a culture. How we perceive ourselves and how others perceive ourselves and how others perceive us are intrinsic aspects of our individual psyche and our social personality. This dual perception can affect behavior and choice of values, and can determine the extent of conformity or rebelliion (Kneller, 1966).

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Because these students lack knowledge of the English language, they frequently have difficulty in acquiring and processing information and in expressing in their own words what they have learned. Our use of language enables us to think, to learn and to express our beliefs and values (Brunelle, 1973).

Language gives individuals a sense of unity. It also brings into play the remembrance of past heroes, events of history, customs, and laws. Language is more than a means of communication. Language brings an entire range of experience and attitudes toward life which can be either immensely satisfying and comforting, or threatening and forbidding (Gumpers, 1970; Troike, 1978). Therefore, in this course tasks are offered with the understanding that students may express themselves in the language most comfortable to them. Students are encouraged to express attitudes, feelings, experiences, and difficulties that they may encounter in the college.

CHOICE AS A FRAMEWORK

In the course, 'choice' is emphasized as a framework for understanding oneself, the environment one lives in, and one's new adopted country. This framework is provided by discussing with the students the importance of short vs. long-term goals. In making a choice it is important to consider one's abilities and skills , rather than merely resorting to wishful thinking. Use of the Guided design (Stager, R.A., 1976) is helpful.

TRANSITIONS

A consideration in the planning of lessons in this course is the students' poor sense of self, lack of inner understanding, and confusion in dealing with their feelings, due mainly to the transition which they are making and to "crisis culture". Patterson (1970) describes a 'crisis culture' as one that is in change and transition, resulting in anxiety and dissension. It is a time when the search for purpose, meaning and identity is of major concern. Students are encouraged to voice their feelings on 'homesickness' relating it to school, careers, community, and to where they will be "now" if they were home. The three main similarities among these would seem to be that each has experienced (1) an ending, (2) a period of student's confusion and distress, (3) a new beginning. Transitional Analysis model personality (Berne, 1964; Harris, 1969), helps students identify and articulate self-statements. Small group interaction helps them to validate their own self-perception and to get feedback. This is an essential component in gaining insights.

LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

These students suffer from the experience of learned helplessness and a sense that they make little impact on the world. (Seligman, 1975). Many of these students were 'abandoned' by their parents when they were small. For many, abandonment came out of the need of survival. They were left with families so that

their parents were able to migrate in search for a better life. This learned helplessness has resulted in the internalization of their anger and becoming passive in both learning and behavior. It is highly important in gaining insights and changing behavior, for students to compare their own experiences with those of other's who have coped in similar circumstances. The course changes students focus of control from external to internal, so that they can learn to control "happenings" (Coleman, 1966; Rotter, 1975). Emphasis is placed on their becoming more active in their decision making process. Students are exposed to traditional methods; such as library research or interviewing others in their lives. Students attend various presentations offered by the Kingsborough Career Office, as well as by role-playing interviews. They learn by actively participating in this process.

SOCIAL ISOLATION

Often, these students suffer from social isolation, but in school they are able to find others who are striving for the same goals who come from similar backgrounds. They speak the same language, have similar values, similar dreams, and similar culture. These students tend to form a close bond with each other. This can be dangerous. At times, they need each other so much that they may forget their reasons for going to college and neglect their studies. Some students concentrate on their friendships in order to protect each other from the world. They can become gullible and easily manipulated by others. They may become confused in the process and forget who their friends are. A skit composed in each class by the students themselves helps them see their roadblocks to success. The topics for the skit have included "Taking Charge /Responsibility is the Key to Success," and "Peer Pressure and Responsibility". These skits help students gain insight.

At the conclusion of the course, students complete a self-profile paper. Teacher and student gain from the process of interpersonal communication and analysis.

CONCLUSION

The course is highly individualized. Success is defined as doing the best you can possibly do. Feedback from the students has been almost uniformly positive. In voicing their opinions, students get to know their similarities and differences, which offers them the opportunity to find personal meaning as well as cognitive structure.

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Commentary

Supporting the Community College

Leon M. Goldstein

More than 40 years ago, President Truman's Commission on Higher Education established a network of public two-year educational institutions, creating the term "community college." Today, more than 55 percent of entering freshmen begin their college careers at the approximately 1,300 community college in the United States. The Commission observed in 1947 that "barriers to educational opportunity involve grave consequences for the individual and society." Such barriers, the Commission declared, deprive young people of "an equal chance with others to ake the most of their native abilities" and deprive society of individuals who are "getting enough preparation for assuming the personal, social, and civil responsibilities of adults living in a democratic society."

Unfortunately, community colleges are currently facing indomitable and persistent challenges from within and without. The first of these problems concerns the "community college image." To some, the community college is not considered an integral and acceptable component of higher education. Its multi-faceted mission and laudable pluralistic outlook appear anathema to the adherents of the "elistist" philosophy of education. The changing mission of the college becomes "suspect." It may have had, in the past, as its unique purpose and function, occupational education and terminal degrees, but, nowadays, it lives up to its name "community' college. It serves *its* community. It permits students an entree into higher education; an entree unavailable until now. It bridges the gap between senior high school and senior college for the entire spectrum of a population struggling for upward mobility. Through student development and an entire gamut of support services the possibility of higher educational advancement is not longer a myth. The inevitable problem faced is fiscal in nature. Community colleges, which are predominantly public institutions, find themselves periodically, if not annually, in the midst of budget crises.

Leon M. Goldstein is the President of Kingsborough Community College, CUNY.

Today, the community colleges in New York City face massive budget cuts for 1990-91.

In spite of these projected reductions, the community college must continue to make equality of opportunity an operational fact of life. For 20 years, the City University's community colleges have been committed to putting the principle of open admissions into practice. The colleges provide accessible, low-cost, high-quality, and service-oriented education to all, not just a priveleged few; this has been our calling since we began. We welcome the highschool honor student, but we also welcome the economically disadvantaged inner-city resident; the high school graduate who, ten years later, sees the need for an advanced degree; the union member; the senior citizen. Kingsborough programs such as New Start give senior-college students who are doing poorly a second chance to succeed at a community college. College Now encourages those high school students who may not consider further education to prticipate in the experience of college coursework and learn about the advantages of higher education. The My Turn program proves to senior citizens that it's never too late to earn a college degree: they can take tuition-free courses at a CUNY college.

In addition to its unique mission, the community college has the unique characteristic of providing room for experimentation. Community colleges are particularly well suited to serve as clearinghouses for testing new approaches to education that meet changing employment needs. With close ties to local business and industry groups, the community college is able to direct its programs to employment conditions as they exist, not as they are thought to exist.

The community college enhances the life of the City. To allow funding to lag would be a sever disservice to the general public, directly affecting the availability of skilled employees to meet the needs of both the public and private sectors. In economic terms alone, the lack of trained personnel could further exacerbate the strained fiscal plight of the City. But in human terms, the failure to develop the potential of *all* the populace to its highest degree would be disasterous.

IMPROVING STUDENT SELF-CONCEPT: THE VIDEO INTERVIEW PROCESS

Fredric L. Mayerson
Edward G. Martin

In 1981, the Special Education Division of the New York City Public Schools reaffirmed its belief that all students can benefit from career and occupational education, and can successfully acquire the skills to enhance their career and personal development (Martin, 1981). They identified four "pillars" of success, namely: (1) social skills and attitudes, (2) employment-seeking skills, (3) technical skills, (4) work experience.

It has been our experience that students require assistance with the acquisition of the first two skills. Without the ability to obtain and maintain employment, technical skills are of little use, and work experience cannot (obviously) be attained. Gary Galles of Pepperdine University emphasizes that much of what our students learn in college has less to do with intellectual training than with the unadvertised skills that are learned during that training (Galles, 1989). It is also a modern truism that most workers will change their jobs, if not careers, more than once in their lives.

For these reasons, an effort should be made by counselors and professors to provide supportive environments where students can develop the personal interaction and self-awareness skills necessary for career success. This approach achieves two goals. It enhances a student's own self-concept and confidence, and it improves the student's satisfaction with his or her educational training, increasing the likelihood of continued interaction and student retention.

Our experience has shown that one way to enhance student attitudes and self-concept is neither expensive nor time-consuming. All it takes is an empty, quiet space, and the "recycling" of some underutilized equipment to provide the needed motivation and focus for student learning. We offer the following as an example to spark your own imagination.

For the past few years, we have been conducting a series of workshops that help prepare students for initial job interviews. Working with business students, as well as the Office of Special Services at Kingsborough Community College, we provide an opportunity for students to develop an awareness of themselves and how

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they might interact in the workplace. Such workshops have included sessions on "who am I?", "how do others see me?", "how to prepare resumes", "how to use networking effectively", and "how to deal with negativity during the interview and on the job." Yet, from our perspective, the key to success in all these workshops is the process rather than the content. In this regard, we have found interactive video to be an important and effective training tool for today's technologically-oriented student. The use of video as a tool for behavior awareness and modification, certainly not a new idea, is one that in recent years has been overlooked in its effective application to the college population. Video allows students to practice effective job behaviors both for interviews and, perhaps more importantly, for most interpersonal communications.

Dr. Anthony Colarossi, Director of Student Support Services at KCC, suggests that the positive results of such an approach are related to the context in which the videos are presented. Specifically, the video approach, coupled with human interaction, provides multi-model feedback to the students. This complements the student support inherent in many of the remedial and self-development courses offered by the counseling department at Kingsborough Community College stressing self-exploration and career decision-making.

The American Management Association, (AMA), a leading career training organization, endorses the video approach. They conduct management "physicals" using role-playing and simulations recorded on videotape, which are then evaluated and shared with participants later.

In fact, the effectiveness of videotape as a behavior modification tool is well known. The AMA applauds interactive video use for the way it allows people to take an objective look at themselves, the way others see them. In its estimation, no other medium can accomplish this as effectively. The literature is clear as to the worth of video in the classroom. Baily and Haque (1979; 1978) have found it to be highly successful in allowing students to understand their own movement and body position.

As Thornton (1972) commented, the average youth needs both vision and skill. The video approach fits well with the objectives of the two-year college, which can provide sufficient scope to enable students to earn a living and to adjust themselves to the progress of the world.

The key to using videotape effectively is to understand that like all technology, it is merely a tool which can be a powerful shaping force when used with carefully planned purpose. Our purpose was to allow students to experience the actual stress and interaction of a real interview. We act as the potential employer and invite participants to take their turn as applicant.

The focus for learning and behavior modification is supplied by the videotape. We videotape the entire process—the participants expressions, gestures,

hesitations, and eye contact. Although students are fully aware of the camera at the beginning of the session, they are less aware of its presence as the interview becomes more intense. Watching the monitor, you can see the exact moment when role-playing becomes "real" to each student, and thus when the session becomes most effective.

After all students have had an opportunity to participate, we replay the taped sessions to allow each a chance to see himself or herself as others will in future interviews. Of course, there are certain cautions that must be observed when videotaping special needs students. For instance, we do not pressure anyone to be "on camera"—only volunteers are used. Nor do we show the completed tapes to anyone outside the workshop group. These guidelines are meant to reassure and relax students so that they will be themselves when confronting the "interviewer". In addition, cameras have a way of emphasizing physical imperfections if one gets too close (Martin, 1980). We always maintain a comfortable distance to be certain that the visual image on screen will be appropriate to the image they project. You might ask, "Why videotape at all?" Why not simply discuss the interview with its questions and techniques? First, students are just too nervous during an interview to think about how they appear to others. Even if they could, their perceptions of how they look and act are usually quite different from the image they project. Discussion has its place, but first-hand experience seems to be much more effective in helping students pattern appropriate behavior. Through this video-oriented workshop, students can finally see themselves as they appear to others.

This technique of replaying the video tape **immediately** after the interview, with guidance from the workshop leader, reinforces student strengths and helps them discover weaknesses for themselves. Participants react favorably to the approach. "I don't look as bad as I thought," is a common reaction. "I never realized I speak so quickly," is another. Realizing strengths or weaknesses is the first step in motivating the student to do something about it. The workshop provides a framework within which students can work to improve interpersonal skills and an understanding of self-image.

The use of video can build confidence, proper attitude, appearance, and style to allow a student to "showcase" his or her abilities which might make the difference in obtaining and maintaining employment. In this regard, our sessions borrow from the video-oriented Adkins Employability Program developed at Columbia University (1979), which deals extensively in video motivation and group process.

If you wish to foster skills in interviewing, speaking, or social interaction, you might wish to try this approach. Follow these guidelines to maximize the effectiveness of the session:

(1) Limit workshops to small groups at a time (fewer than ten) to allow students ample time for videotaping, sharing observations, and promoting group

cohesiveness,

(2) Videotape for short sessions (five minutes per participant) being careful not to "zoom" in any closer with the camera than a comfortable speaking distance (2-3 feet),

(3) Role play to promote a realistic environment; prepare a scenario providing guidelines for the session; and supply simple "props" of chairs and desks for more realism,

(4) Allow students to recognize their own mistakes, weaknesses and strengths through watching the videotape replay, but direct their attention to important subtleties they might have missed,

(5) Select workshop leaders who are well versed in the group dynamics and skills being practiced, and who can critique in a positive, effective manner to motivate participants to change.

(6) Above all, there must be trust and friendly interaction between leaders and participants.

When replaying the videotape, stop whenever necessary to discuss these questions with all students, not necessarily the one being "critiqued":

-How do we best display our strengths?

-How can we change weaknesses into strengths?

-How do we deal with other peoples' negativity?

-How should we respond if we cannot think of an answer?

-How do we dress for an interview? For a job?

Successful change can be achieved through small changes over time rather than through a sudden transformation. A second workshop can monitor progress as well as provide additional impetus for further growth.

The humanistic approach to video fosters self-analysis, and the desire to correct weaknesses while maintaining strengths. The result is a stronger individual, ore able to judge his or her worth in the eyes of others. The videotape allows this viewing of self from the outside, but it is still the leader of the group who directs the productive results, and the student who produces them.

We strongly advocate this video method as a means for building on the skills

of each student. The ability to view one's self from "outside" initiates a self-awareness process which may continue to influence student development long after the session has ended. It need not be limited to job interviews alone, but can focus on oral presentations and group dynamics as well.

At a time when we seek to increase student participation and retention, it is proper that we offer students additional experiences that are relevant to their future goals. Consider where you might best apply this technique, which can improve student self-image and provide additional motivation for continuing educational pursuits.

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THE ULTIMATE — TWO WAY BILINGUALISM

Richard Graf

Acronyms abound: E.S.L, E.S.O.L., E.F.L.

Program titles abound: Bilingual Education, English-as-Second Language, English as Foreign Language. Whatever the acronym, whatever the catchy title, only one word is worthy of note. That word is EDUCATION. Whatever the philosophy, whatever the methodology adopted or extoled, the essential "bottom lime" is and must be EDUCATION. Without it, all that verbiage is superfluous.

We may quibble all we want about "second-language" learning whereas, in so many cases, we are faced with multi-language — not second language students. We may quibble all we want about bi- culturalism" whereas, in some many cases, we are faced with students who are already multi-cultural.

Language is, in essence, only a strand — albeit an essential strand — of the entire socialization and acculturation process.

In an effort to find commonality of approach in this compound, complex and complicated area, I devoted the spring 1989 Sabbatical semester to a series of visits to educational centers in the capitals (and capitols) of 17 states, the District of Columbia and to Manitoba, one of the provinces in bilingual Canada.

The 17 states (ranging from Hawaii, on the Pacific rim, to our eastern seaboard) were not chosen at random. These states had each opted for and adopted English as their "Official Language" legislatively or via the constitutional amendment route. Congress is now the foyer for discussion of a possible U.S. Constitutional Amendment to declare English the official tongue of the entire nation.

Although "Official English" was, at the start, the dimension which was to contribute a sense of cohesion to the study, it became a minor element in the research study since those to whom I spoke, at all levels of the educational ladder, seemed to be largely unaware of its official status.

Even among educators who were alert to Official English's significance in their states, they were quick to declare that this "privileged" stature had little or no influence upon instruction given to Limited English Proficient (L.E.P.) students.

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It is a practice in futility to try to compare and contrast approaches at the various levels of the educational spectrum from Kindergarten to post-graduate school. However, whatever the level or student population being serviced and served, certain basic truths or practicalities do surface. They must be understood and appreciated.

The first parameter or practicality to be faced in L.E.P. instruction (as in all other phases of the education process) is that constitutionally, education is not primarily a federal function as is Interstate Commerce, for instance. Consequently, instruction is the primary responsibility of the 50 State Education Departments of the 50 states. The needs and resources of each state are diverse as are the requirements of the local school districts within each state. At any point in time those needs and those resources may and do change — sometimes, drastically.

However, there are federal laws which impinge upon and greatly influence or determine state and local education policy. These laws include the following:

(1) The Federal Bilingual Education Act
(2) The Federal Civil Rights Act
(3) The Federal Voting Rights Act
(4) The Federal Migrant Education Act.

There is federal legislation regarding refugees and the comparatively recent immigrant legalization law with attendant education programs. We must also never lose sight of the import of judicial landmark decisions such as the Lau v. Nichols decision in the early 1970's.

If any state implements education policy which runs counter to federal legislation or court decision, the policy must be changed to achieve uncontested compliance.

Geography, monetary availability and ready access to human and material resources will fashion L.E.P. initiatives which pure theory and intellectual know-how may reject. Immediacy, i.e. current plight and priority, may place long-range plans "on the back burner" since there would be little need for the long-range unless the immediate emergency requirements are met.

Agricultural states and local school districts within the farming areas are faced with the constant and continual here-and-now requirements of migrant farm workers for the education of their sons and daughters. Here, one speaks of a transient population whose home site is of limited, short duration — depending upon type of crop and severity of drought conditions. The youngsters who accompany their parents and guardians must be educated in the local district where the planting or harvesting is taking place.

Correct and immediate placement of these young people (who, more often than not, are bilingual or unilingual in their own native language) is vital. Records of health and scholastic achievement to date for each farm-worker's son or daughter are essential. They are kept up to date by the Federal Government through its nation-wide computer network. Implementation of this almost crisis need for L.E.P. instructional staff and facilities may very well drain the local school district and state during the time of migrant presence although federal funds are provided. This priority diversion of funds and energy from other local projects is the periodic and always immediate concern of our agricultural states. Planning is difficult since the numbers of workers change from season to season. Foreign grain purchases give grain-producing states and local school districts much food for thought.

The demand for bilingual or E.S.L. personnel to meet federal standards to teach the L.E.P. migrant sons and daughters may deplete the sources and availability of ESL/Bilingual teachers, "paras" and "tutors" of at least divert these valuable staff members from other L.E.P. programs offered to local residents.

Thus the superficial freedom of choice on local-state-and-regional levels gives way to the day-to-day practical world of crisis and priority situations as they unexpectedly arise. However, if educators (in this instance) involved in the education of L.E.P. students had complete control over methodology and approach in the education of Limited English Proficient students, what would their choice (s) be?

Both E.S.L. and Bilingual Education have — as a sine qua non —English language components since the ultimate purpose of our educational system is to permit our newly arrived to learn English within our educational settings.

The debate, conflict and controversy arise as to the road to follow toward this long-range or ultimate objective.

The English as a Second Language or English as a Foreign Language or English for Speakers of Other Languages proponents opt for total immersion in English, i.e. the use of the language in all content courses — even if a simplified form called "Sheltered English" must be used at the beginning.

The Bilingual Education advocates feel strongly that content courses must be taught in the students' native tongue(s). Why must students be prevented from learning geography or history or mathematics (subjects vital to future survival) because of a language barrier? They also defend the strengthening of the students' knowledge of their own (native) language.

Bilingual Education advocates also insist that the L.E.P. students' background, culture, civilization and literature — as well as the language — be perpetuated. They hold that language and culture are mutually, inextricably, intertwined. Culture transmits language and language transmits culture. One is not and can not

be separated from the other.

However, those involved in Bilingual Education seem to agree that Multilingualism better expresses the true nature of their programs since so many of the L.E.P. students come to our shores with a knowledge of more than one "Foreign Language." They also prefer the title "Multilingual-Multicultural Program" to reflect the wider scope to their educational intent: language + culture.

Within the Multilingual-Multicultural group of educators there is a long-standing discussion. Some tend toward a program called "Transitional" whereas others lean toward one bearing the name "Maintenance."

The "transitional" bilingual-bicultural or "transitional" multilingual-multicultural programs see mainstreaming within a fixed period of time — be it three to five years or five to seven years. When E.S.L. proponents bow to the immediate use of bilingual or multilingual sequences (and this does occur occasionally) they insist on the transient nature of the program: it is to last as short a time as possible. Students must be re-directed into E.S.L. (or "regular") classrooms as soon as possible - as soon as retesting of English competencies so indicates.

The "maintenance" bilingual-bicultural or "maintenance" multilingual-multicultural programs see mainstreaming as an ultimate or long-range objective — not be be circumscribed by a specific number of months or semesters or academic years. Even if students do achieve marked efficiency and proficiency in English, they should not — they must not — lose the cultural values inherent in the program. The pupils must be maintained in that environment perhaps during their entire elementary or even secondary school experience.

Recently a new dimension has been added to Bilingualism and Multilingualism; to Biculturalism and to Multiculturalism. A new direction has been added. In fact, the program is called:

TWO WAY BILINGUAL-BICULTURAL
EDUCATION
or
TWO WAY MULTILINGUAL-MULTICULTURAL
EDUCATION

Until the acceptance of this recent ingredient, all L.E.P. instruction had been "one-directional." The L.E.P. student entered the American Education System. By the time this Limited English Proficient individual graduated, he had learned English and was theoretically proficient both in his native tongue and culture as well as English language and American culture. He had, it was strongly argued, much advantage over his monolingual (English only) peers. They did not have an equivalent entree to another culture, civilization and language.

Therefore, the expanded version of Bi- and Multi-Lingual, Bi- and Multi-Cultural programs emerged. The monolingual English-speaking students have been invited to join the L.E.P. students in this linguistic and cultural endeavor. Exclusivity of admission was being abolished. Lack of knowledge of the foreign language and culture is as prevelent among the American student admitees to the Program as is the lack of knowledge of English and the American culture to the L.E.P. admittees. By graduation time, however, both American and former Limited English Proficient students are expected to have attained equal facility in the two languages in question and in the two cultures.

In spite of the evolution in thought and direction of Bi- and Multi- Lingual and Cultural Programs, they are still in the minority in comparison with and contrast to English as Second Language Programs. A majority of educators still feel that the purpose of L.E.P. instruction is rapid mainstreaming of the immigrant(s) amongst us. Through instant and constant immersion in English — be it in language, language arts or content classes — this end result could become an immediate or intermediate rather than a long-range aim and objective. E.S.L. is utilized for the instruction of immigrants whose native language is exotic, e.g. Farsi or Hindi. No bi or multi lingual/ cultural programs await them and yet they succeed — to enter the mainstream through English immersion. Consequently, these E.S.O.L. adherents insist that bilingualism or multulingualism is not essential for acculturation here.

In addition, the Bilingual/Bicultural (and Multulingual/ Multucultural) programs are much more expensive to initiate and operate. From where will the needed funds come? If it be from Title VII (the Federally funded Bilingual Education Act), many state and local jurisdictions fear that acceptance of the funds implies not only matching or contributory percentages by them now but the future necessity of paying for the entire Program(s)' costs once federal pecuniary help ends. Then, they would have to assume 100% of the course cost. Burdens would be unbearable with the disappearance of money from Washington.

It is extremely rare that the State Education Department underwrites the equivalent of a federal Title VII project. Only one state visited has shown a willingness to do so. If a local jurisdiction wishes to go ahead without Chapter (Title VII) funds, on its own, it must either (a) divert education funds from other worthwhile and needed projects, e.g. Honors Programs, or (b) if permitted, levy additional real estate taxes or float a new Bond Issue. New real estate taxes may force property owners in the country or school district to move out — thus eroding the tax base still more. The issue of new tax-free bonds is also dangerous because of the increase in local indebtedness. Thus the pragmatic joins the philosophic opponents to Bilingual and Multilingual Programs — leaving English as Foreign Language (another synonym for ESL or ESOL) as the Program of predilection on the K-12 grade levels.

Bilingualism and Multilingualism do not fare any better in higher education.

Except for a rare example (in a community school outside of Los Angeles) other 2, 4 and 5 year colleges and universities visited tend to offer E.S.L. only be it to resident or nonresident students, national or international students, undergraduate or graduate students. In all these instances, the major — nay — the only purpose for the sequential offering of "remedial" or "noncredit" English courses to L.E.P. students is to instill English and, coincidentally, a knowledge and understanding of American society.

The tendency, on college and university campuses visited appears to be the search for and recruitment of International Students (primarily). These students may very well be non-degree seeking. They come to this country with student visas, with I-20 forms. Most are sponsored by their home government or home corporation where they are currently employed. Expenses are paid by the sponsors. The students return home after completion of the usually intensive E.S.L. courses — to be welcomed back by employer (private or governmental) with a raise in salary and position.

If the sponsor wishes the student to return with an American degree — Bachelor's or Master's — the sponsorship may continue for the duration of the degree program, itself. This is beyond the English as Second Language level and implies the success achieved by the International Student(s) in English language acquisition — sufficient to understand texts and lectures in the soon-to-be-taken credit-bearing courses.

These International Students attend, for the most part, Institutes located geographically and physically on the college or university grounds — but academically very distant from the degree-granting institution as far as formal degree admission is concerned. Admission to the Institute in NO WAY implies current or subsequent guaranteed admission to the University, itself. Once the language sequence is completed, application for matriculated status must be made to the University. Background and credentials are then evaluated prior to any definitive acceptance.

To this Institute may also be sent non-International students who apply for admission. They are immigrants whose native language is not English and whose English proficiency or competency test(s) show no minimal level of linguistic achievement. They, therefore, are redirected by the College or University Admissions Office to the Institute. They attend (if they so choose) for the amount of time needed to complete the levels of E.S.L. coursework required of them. Both they and the International Students must pay dearly for attendance which is usually 22-25 hours per week. Each new level attendance demands the additional payment of session fees (tuition). Courses completed do not count toward the eventual Bachelor's degree. These non-degree, non-International Students are not guaranteed admission to the University (as their International counterparts) and must reapply for admission once the Institute E.S.L sequence is completed. If then admitted, they begin their first credit of work toward the 120 or 128 credits required for their chosen undergraduate

degree program.

Thus those admitted to matriculant status have already proven themselves linguistically capable. The high or relatively high ACT or SAT scores required (of the non-International matriculant) and the high or relatively high TOEFL test scores (for the International matriculant) ensures probable ability to cope with college and university degree (and course) requirements. This happy combination of academic circumstances properly relating to attrition reduces the possibility of such an eventuality. This happy combination of academic circumstances properly relating to retention increases the possibility of such an eventuality as well.

At the City University and its constituent units, most of out English as a Second Language students are not International Students per se, i.e. most do not expect to return to their homelands for better positions. They are not sponsored by government or commercial enterprises. They have decided to make the United States, and at this time, New York their homes.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to introduce them to the language with which they will work at school, on-the-job, and in the community. We do not want them in the least to forget their original culture, literature, civilization and language. We wish to provide proficiency in English to enrich their lives and that of their families.

Toward this end, the ESL area is pleased to work with a large spectrum of languages form more than 37 countries. Although the greatest number seem to be Cantonese, Arabic or Russian speaking, there are several from a variety of other tongues - Farsi, Creole or Vietnamese. The complexity of makeup is a challenge since all (whatever their origin) have a same need - that of making a future for themselves here. All academic and cultural resources at our command must be used in order that each and every one of them succeed. The method or methods used cannot and should not be prescribed beforehand nor should they be inflexible. What assistance we give - academic and support services, i.e. counseling, must depend upon the problems of each individual and the specific circumstances in which they find themselves. By doing so, students will hopefully be motivated to complete their courses of study and degrees - thus diminishing or (better still) eliminating the specter of attrition so wasteful at this important, crucial time.

Overcoming Cyberphobia: Reducing Negative Attitudes Towards Technology

Renato R. Bellu
Edward G. Martin

Introduction

As most educators know, mastering course content is only one obstacle facing students each semester. More often, students are hampered by less noticeable factors that can diminish, or frustrate, their ability to participate fully in the learning process. Perhaps the most important factor is attitude.

Attitudes have been shown to represent our affinities for, and aversions to, situations, objects and people (Bem, 1970). Attitudes are a person's evaluative, emotional feelings toward a particular target, and can be determined by one's belief. More specifically, whether an individual feels aversion towards an object depends on whether the relevant beliefs about the object are negative or not. In turn, beliefs represent the information the individual has about the particular object.

There is ample evidence in the social psychology literature causally linking beliefs with attitudes (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Therefore, any attempt at changing a person's attitude towards an object must focus (1) on the set of beliefs the person holds about the object and, consequently, (2) on providing as accurate information as possible about the object. Moreover, some writers have suggested that mere exposure to an object can enhance one's attitude toward the object (Zajonc, 1968). Certainly, a variety of sources, both affective and cognitive, influence attitude (Jacobovitz, 1968).

Many of us are acquainted with the general attitudes that can affect classroom dynamics and resultant student success. These include attitudes toward the instructor, assignments, self, subject matter, course goals, and peers, among others. Yet, in today's college classrooms, there is a hidden attitude that confronts many students without our knowledge. This negative attitude is cyberphobia--the fear of technology.

Learning goals cannot be successfully reached if students' attitudes are not positive and if there is no clear correlation between our methods and that goal (Guskey, 1986). What we must not overlook, however, is that unspoken or unrealized

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factors, such as cyberphobia, can subtly alter student attitudes towards our goals or the practices we use to achieve them. And just because your course has nothing to do with computers directly does not mean you are immune from the effects of cyberphobia.

For example, your course may require individual research or term papers. Libraries are becoming more technological each day. It is likely that students will have to use microfilm and microfiche readers to access source material. Some will use microcomputers to scan through card catalogs. Others will access remote databases, typing keyword descriptors into computer terminals hooked into telephone lines.

Your coursework may also rely on students' abilities to perform statistical analyses with the help of a calculator or computer, or prepare a spreadsheet for accounting. Other courses may require the student to understand (or even use) the complexities of computer-synthesized musical compositions, or computer-generated artwork. If nothing else, all students could vastly benefit from typing their work on a word processor, having access to editing and rewrite features unavailable on a typewriter alone.

And yet, many of us pay little attention to the fears that students may have in using technology. Certainly, video games and VCRs have made many students technologically "wise" (Clement, 1981), yet studies still show a marked difference in the attitudes towards computers among age levels and genders (Fennema and Sherman, 1980; Key and Omerod, 1976). The range of students in our classes, in terms of age and gender, demands that we consider differences in their abilities and anxiety in dealing with the technological tools we may take for granted.

In light of the theoretical and empirical literature, it seems reasonable to assume that a person's positive attitude toward technology can be enhanced by providing accurate information about, and exposure to, computers and other technology.

Why are attitudes important? Clearly, attitudes affect both behavioral intuitions and actual behavior. The evidence for this belief-attitude-behavior link is quite strong (Festinger, 1964; Bem, 1972; Frey and Wicklund, 1978). These findings imply that a person's willingness to use microcomputers, for example, is determined largely by what he or she knows about computers, the accuracy of the information, and the extent of exposure. This issue appears to be a particularly crucial one for educators and other professionals whose career development is becoming more and more dependent on their degree of computer literacy. In short, cyberphobia, the fear of technology, is a major hindrance to acquiring computer and other related skills, which may hinder further a student's ability to successfully reach stated goals.

Some recent findings on teachers' attitudes toward computers have sug-

gested that excessive negative feelings, typified by high anxiety, can actually inhibit learning, and that the lowering of an individual's anxiety level occurs over time. Furthermore, the timing of such change is mediated by previous exposure to computers (Honeyman and White, 1987). Similarly, teachers' attitudes toward computers were found to relate positively to computer knowledge (Marshall and Bannon, 1986).

In view of the previous discussion, an investigation of the possibility of enhancing the attitudes of a group of professionals towards microcomputers was attempted. It was reasoned that if a professional received accurate and systematic information about the use of microcomputers and, concurrently, could actually use equipment over time, positive attitudes should show some degree of enhancement.

Of all the professionals who have the potential to make use of microcomputers on a daily basis, and who could most benefit in time and effort from their applications, perhaps accountants rank highest. Not only have microcomputers seen enormous growth in their applications to the financial management of businesses (the realm of the accountant), but accountants themselves represent a particularly useful group of professionals in terms of their relationship to technological automation. They follow standard procedures and rules for record-keeping, for which they rely heavily on paper and pencil ("manual") techniques, and usually distrust computer output with an assumed fear of computer-generated errors and difficulty of audit.

A grant was developed by faculty members of the Department of Business of Kingsborough Community College in cooperation with a local accounting organization to provide an introductory course to practicing Certified Public Accountants who were previously unfamiliar with microcomputer applications. The sample consisted of sixty accountants who participated in the course, offered at no cost. The course was conducted entirely in a microcomputer laboratory equipped with IBM-PC, XT, and PS/2 microcomputers, twice a week for a period of six weeks. Topics included hardware, Disk Operating Systems, and selected software including a spreadsheet, word processor, database, accounting and tax preparation programs. Table 1 displays the demographic characteristics of the sample pertinent to our discussion.

TABLE1

AGE	Between 21-30	3.4%
	31-40	40.7
	41-50	18.6
	51-60	20.9
	Over 60	16.9
GENDER	Male	93.3%
	Female	6.7

YEARS IN PRACTICE	Less than 3	1.7%
	3 to 5	5.1
	6 to 10	11.9
	11 to 15	22.0
	16 to 20	18.6
	Over 20	40.7

It is interesting to note that 59.3% of the sample as shown in Table 1 had over 16 years of experience. These were, in a sense, "old timers" who were used to manual systems and had more reason to shun (and mistrust) computer-generated output.

Measure

The questionnaire used in the study consisted of 67 questions--17 provided demographic data and the remaining 50 measured attitudes toward computers. The computer attitude scale was substantially modified by the researchers from one developed to ascertain teacher attitudes (Beauregard, 1975). Half of the 7-point Likert Questions were reversed scored. A factor analysis and discriminant analysis showed the scale to be comprised of 9 meaningful dimensions, with an internal reliability coefficient of .86.

Findings and Discussion

Table 2 shows the pre-and post-test results. Noting that a higher mean indicates a more negative attitude toward computers, the results support the study's hypotheses. While the difference between the pre- and post-test means is modest, it is in the hypothesized direction, with significance at the .001 level. Moreover, attitudes are relatively enduring; that is, individuals' feelings toward objects remain fairly stable over time. Therefore, even a modest change over a relatively short period of time could have high predictive value.

TABLE 2

RESULTS OF PRE- AND POST-TEST
OF THE COMPUTER ATTITUDE SCALE

	N	Mean	S.D.	t	p
Pretest	60	248.4	25.3	5.83	<.001
Post-test	39	221.2	13.8		

The basic findings of this study (presented in an abbreviated form in this article) suggest that systematic acquisition of correct information about computers

(and other technology), when coupled with direct experience, even for a short time, appears to reduce negative attitudes towards these modern "wonders."

The suggested actions in terms of enhancing student performance in this technological world are clear. Spend some time introducing students to the tools they will encounter as they work through your course. Do not assume they are familiar with their operation, and certainly do not assume they share your feelings about their use. Take your class to the library to demonstrate microfilm and microfiche readers, computer searches, automated card catalogs, and other modern conveniences. Visit the computer lab to explain (however briefly) a word processor. Discuss the use of a modem to connect home computers to mainframe databases. In short, make information and direct experience available to your students and personally encourage them to use the tools available. If you do not possess the expertise, seek colleagues who do. It will "pay off" in reduced cyberphobia and an increase in student satisfaction and productivity. You may wish to expose yourself to these tools, if you haven't already done so, getting rid of your own cyberphobia as well.

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Facing the Educational Challenges of the '90's

Robert L. Hess

The level of educational preparation, sophistication, and responsibility of students entering The City University of New York is becoming increasingly less satisfactory. My colleagues and I are deeply concerned about this since we all have a vested interest in seeing that there is a progressive improvement in the readiness of college-bound students. Since some 20% of our college students choose Education as their major, a significant number of them will become your future employees and your future colleagues. Unless we break the chain of underpreparedness, many of the issues of educational concern can never be resolved.

At Brooklyn College we made a number of pivotal decisions and came to a number of important conclusions in the 1980's. I strongly suggest that you consider them in terms of their applicability to elementary, intermediate, and secondary education.

We discovered that innovation for the sake of innovation alone leads nowhere unless the successful results are institutionalized and become part of everyday operations. What that means is that our primary agenda must be neither political nor fiscal, but a return to an understanding of the basic purpose of education. This will require a rethinking of what we mean when we talk about New York City's manpower needs.

When we define those needs, we must not do so in terms of a least common denominator approach. We must, of course, also examine how we might raise the aspirations of the students and of the families of students. But that is not enough. We must, without apology, look at that segment of our high school students who go on to college and who will become the future leaders of our City. We must and can play a key role in shaping their education.

What is my prescription for education in the 1990's ? Let me offer you four points for your consideration:

(1) There must be better articulation between your end product and our beginning product. That required closer articulation with the colleges and universities which will be taking the top 10% of your students, the top 30% of your students, and in the case of community colleges any one of your graduates. You must ask yourselves what you can do to prepare your exiting students to meet our entry standards, especially the basic skills of reading, writing, and computation. For those of you who are high school principals, I issue the following challenge: How many of you regularly contact the colleges where your students enroll to determine whether

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or not they pass the basic skills assessment tests that are becoming increasingly common in our institutions of higher learning ? If you do not, then I strongly suggest that you consider doing so.

(2) The second prescription is one of which we are all conscious : curriculum reform. It is playing a major role on the national scene for all levels of education. At the college level, at the Board of Education level, and at the local school level, we must give a hard look at the curriculum and determine whether we are actually achieving the goals that we set for it. But curriculum reform in and of itself is insufficient ! anyone of you who has watched a college reform its curriculum knows that most of it is done along the periphery. All too often the basic questions about meeting established goals are not asked. When you address the question of curriculum reform, as inevitably you must, I urge you not to do it in its most superficial way by saying, "What courses should we add ? What courses should we remove ? " You must look at the larger issue of what your goals and objectives are and ascertain whether they drive the curriculum or not.

(3) The 1970's were supposed to have demoralized colleges and universities, disenfranchising faculty, separating them for their sense of mission, and causing them to be less than competent. When I arrived at Brooklyn College in 1979, people believed that, like Moses in the wilderness, we would have to wait forty years to get back on track. We chose, however, not to wait it out. We acted. What characterizes Brooklyn college today is the release of a tremendous amount of faculty energy that is creating productive outcomes. That faculty energy came about as a result of a focus on curriculum reform. What we learned is a lesson for all: there can be no curriculum development without faculty development and no faculty development without curriculum development.

(4) None of this would have occurred without positive leadership. We must squarely face the question of how to develop leadership at all levels. The college president or the school principal must not only define the issues and pilot the ship. He or she must serve as a proactive role model for both the teaching and the administrative staff.

We in the university are privileged in that we do not have to work under the constraints of the rules and regulations that characterize the bureaucracy of public education systems in American cities. But we do have similar constraints. What is significant is that we do not operate on the assumption that we may do only that which is permitted. We operate on the assumption that that which is not forbidden is permissible. This means that there is tremendous leeway for creativity in leadership. I offer you a challenge as one educator to another.

We in the colleges and universities are dependent upon you to do a better job in the preparation of our incoming freshmen. We are dependent upon you who serve as supervisors and administrators to develop a better interface between our curriculum and yours. We in the colleges and universities are dependent upon you, just as you in the elementary, intermediate, and secondary schools are dependent upon us to provide better professional preparation for your teachers. Remember, leadership is meaningless unless you lead !

CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and other sponsors, June 6-8, 1990. University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont. Theme: "The Quality of Campus Life: Implications for Educational and Administrative Practice." Contact: Deborah Hunter, (802) 656-2030.

University of Wisconsin and The American Council on Education, June 7-8, 1990. University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Theme: "Colloquium on Ethnicity and Public Policy- the American Academy in a Plural Society- Its Obligation to Lead." Contact: Thomas V. Tonnesen, (414) 229-4700.

American Association of University Professors, June 16-17, 1990. Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. Annual Meeting. Contact: AAUP, (202) 737-5900.

Noel/Levitz National Center for Student Retention, July 7-10, 1990. Washington, D.C. National Conference on Student Retention. Contact: Noel/Levitz, (800) 728-4700.

Center for Critical Thinking and Moral Critique, August-8, 1990. Conoma State University, Rohnert Park, California. Theme: "Critical Thinking: The Thinking that Masters the Content." Contact: CCTMC, (707) 664-2940.

American Psychological Association, August 10-14. Boston, Massachusetts. Annual Convention. Contact: Convention Office, APA, 1200 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

University of Prince Edward Island, August 12-16. University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. Theme: "Peer Counseling Training Institute." Contact: Marion Basha, Department of Student Services, University of Prince Edward Island, 550 University Avenue, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island CIA 4P3, Canada.

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